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INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

EDWIN S. STUART

DELIVERED AT

HARRISBURG, JANUARY 15, 1907,

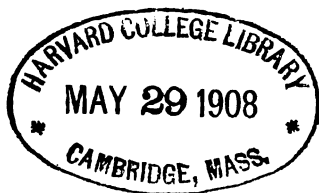
ON THE

Occasion of His Inauguration as Governor of Pennsylvania. — Governor.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
OF  
EDWIN S. STUART,

DELIVERED AT

HARRISBURG, JANUARY 15, 1907, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS INAUGURATION AS GOVERNOR OF PENNSYLVANIA.

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Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives and Fellow-Citizens of Pennsylvania:

I assume the duties of the office to which I have been elected with a profound sense of the obligations that rest upon me. It is my duty, in the words of the Constitution, to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed," and I pledge myself to a just, impartial and vigorous enforcement of them. I wish to be considered, in the conduct of all business pertaining to the Commonwealth, as the Governor of the whole people of Pennsylvania. In my action upon every bill presented to me for my approval I shall endeavor to be guided by those considerations which in my judgment will best promote the interests and welfare of all the people of the State.

The platform upon which I was elected promised many important reforms which the people had been demanding for years, and which in some instances, had been persistently denied them. I gave my word to the people that if elected Governor of Pennsylvania I would, to the extent of my power, insist upon the fulfilment of those promises. All of the reform pledges of that platform shall constitute a part of the policy of my administration; and, without any assumption of dictating legislative action, their early enactment into laws is urgently recommended—as urgently as words and acts can make the recommendation. The people rightfully assumed



from the result of the recent election that these promised reforms would be accomplished; and it is not only my duty as the Executive of the Commonwealth to recommend and urge them, as I now do most earnestly, but it is the duty of the Legislature, as the law-making body, to see to it that by wise and effective legislation every pre-election promise made to the people be faithfully redeemed.

While we still have a large surplus in the State Treasury, subject to appropriation, it is very important that great care be exercised in considering the appropriations about to be made, the institutions entirely under State control being entitled, in my judgment, to first consideration.

Preeminently, I desire to call attention to the condition of the hospitals for the care of the indigent insane. To my mind, the care of these unfortunates in the first duty of the State, whose wards they are. This obligation is a sacred one, and not only rests upon the ground of common humanity, but arises because it is utterly impossible for the indigent insane to receive elsewhere the treatment which they ought to have and which the State should furnish to them.

We have not kept pace in the last ten years with the rapid increase in the number of cases of this character, and as consequence the State institutions for the insane are much over-crowded. It is not an imperative necessity for us to take such prompt action as will enable these poor unfortunates in the various hospitals throughout the State to receive proper care. Not only should attention be given to those whose condition seems to promise ultimate restoration to health, but the hopelessly insane should have whatever care is necessary to make them comfortable.

Therefore, I most earnestly recommend that immediate consideration be given the question of providing additional accommodations, not only to relieve present conditions, but also to allow for the increase during the next few years. This can be done promptly by an early appropriation to finish the new hospital-being built at Allentown, and also by appropriations for the erection of new buildings at Harrisburg, Warren, Danville and Norristown.

No subject appeals for immediate legislative action so strongly as this.

The advance in medical science has demonstrated nothing more conclusively than that consumption, that wide-spread infectious malady whose ravages are most conspicuous among the families of the poor, is susceptible of being cured by special treatment and care. Our people of wealth can command relief from this terrible disease, but among the destitute and those who have had no education in the laws of health many lives are sacrificed because the patients do not possess the means to enable them to receive proper

attention. Isolation and proper hygienic conditions are indispensable to curative treatment; and these may be secured by the establishment of hospitals, sanitariums, and dispensaries for the afflicted who are unable to provide such relief for themselves.

Our many noble charities, which mutely but eloquently testify to the generous philanthropy of the people of Pennsylvania, can receive no more appropriate accession to their number than these institutions; and I can conceive of no monument to the cause of charity that is more worthy of the State's beneficence.

The Constitution (Article X, Section 1) makes it obligatory upon the General Assembly to appropriate at least one million dollars each year for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public schools, wherein all the children of this Commonwealth above the age of six years may be educated. While the State has been very liberal heretofore and has appropriated more money for this purpose than any other State in the Union, yet the school appropriations for the last decade have not increased proportionately as much as those made to other departments of the State Government. There is apparently a general desire to deal even more generously with our public schools, and at the same time to lessen local school taxes. With our matchless progress in material wealth our State revenues must rapidly increase, and we can safely advocate the policy of making much larger appropriations to our educational system, thereby practically relieving the farms and homes of the State, as far as possible, from taxation for school purposes.

In my opinion the State gets no better return from money invested than from that which is appropriated to the maintenance of the public school system, and particularly from that portion paid to the great body of earnest men and women engaged in instructing the youth in the various educational institutions throughout the State. Therefore I most earnestly recommend such largely increased appropriations to the public schools as in the judgment of the Legislature the financial condition of the State will justify.

Among the many desirable reforms which have been promised to the people, and which they are anxious to see realize, is that of the improvement of the roads and highways of the State and a more generous policy in promoting their construction. To this end more liberal appropriations have been widely discussed and generally recommended. We should go on with the good work so that every county may appreciate the benefit of it and every township profit by the example. I most heartily recommend the setting aside for this purpose of as large sums of money as the revenues of the State may from time to time permit.

I believe it would be a mistake to take the supervision of this important matter from the control of the State; for uniformity, wherever possible, is to be desired, and local indifference or waste should not be invited.

Money honestly, economically, and judiciously spent on good roads is a wise investment for the State. I hope eventually to see all the important highways in Pennsylvania in such conditions that they will be open to travel at all seasons of the year for those who have need to use them. At present many of the most important roads in the State are in very bad condition during several months of the winter and spring, and are the cause of great inconvenience to the travelling public.

This entire subject, to my mind, is one of vital interest and is entitled to prompt consideration by the Legislature.

I most earnestly recommend the enactment of legislation to confer upon trolley companies, under proper supervision and control, the right to carry freight. The early passage of a bill to this effect is most desirable. Such a law will enable the farmer to market his products more cheaply, and will enhance the value of countless farms through reduced expenses and increased facilities.

All of Pennsylvania's diversified interests are mutually dependent upon one another, and have been stimulated by the present wonderful era of industrial prosperity; but the farmer is not equally favored by those general conditions; he takes the greatest risk and too often finds the least reward. He is in every way worthy of generous treatment by the Commonwealth.

A kindred subject is that of conferring upon trolley companies the power of eminent domain. Properly guarded, the exercise of such power may be highly advantageous to the public. It has its dangers, which must be carefully looked into and avoided as far as possible. If by this means it is made more practicable for future trolley lines to avoid the public highways and build over private property, a double purpose will be served. It will protect and maintain free roads for the unrestricted use of the public, while making travel on such roads safer for the driving community. This subject is submitted for the thoughtful consideration of the Legislature.

Article XVII, Section 5, of the Constitution of Pennsylvania provides as follows:

"No incorporated company doing the business of a common carrier shall, directly or indirectly, prosecute or engage in mining or manufacturing articles for transportation over its works; nor shall such company, directly or indirectly, engage in any other business than that of common carriers, or hold or acquire lands, freehold or leasehold, directly or indirectly, except such as shall be necessary for

carrying on its business, but any mining and manufacturing company may carry the products of its mines and manufactories on its railroad or canal not exceeding fifty miles in length."

It has been charged that this Article is being violated by transportation companies within the State, and I therefore recommend that such legislation as may be necessary to make it effective be given the early consideration of the Legislature, in order that any violations of this law may cease.

Another important question which confronts the Legislature is the propriety or necessity of creating a State Railroad Commission, to prevent discrimination of favoritism by common carriers within the State, with powers similar to those conferred upon the Interstate Commerce Commission for the regulation of interstate transportation or such other powers as the General Assembly may designate. This tribunal would be useful in promoting needed facilities, remedying abuses, and adjudicating all State questions touching transportation.

In the preparation of legislation upon this subject care should be exercised to keep within legitimate limits. I do not believe that it is the intention or desire of the people of the State unnecessarily to harass, annoy, or attempt to destroy corporations; for these have their rights under the law the same as individuals, and those rights must be respected. It should be our purpose not to attempt to destroy or tear down, but to regulate. In other words, corporations receiving rights and powers from the State should be compelled to exercise those rights and powers, not for their own benefit solely, but in the interest and for the accommodation of the public from whom they receive their charters.

I most earnestly recommend legislation that will secure a rate not exceeding two cents per mile upon all railroads within the Commonwealth, and such further legislation as will require the sale of mileage books at a rate not exceeding two cents a mile, without the requirement of a ten dollar deposit and without any other obnoxious regulation or restriction attached.

No appeal to the law-making power for relief should commend itself with greater favor than that for the prohibition of the sale of adulterated food, drugs and beverages. No more serious obligation can be imposed upon public officials than develops upon those who are entrusted with the protection of the public health by a strict enforcement of the pure food laws. An innocent violator of the law should not be made a scapegoat for the real culprit.

I therefore recommend to the careful consideration of the Legislature the advisability of such changes as will make the law protect both the people who are consumers, and who might be imposed

upon, and the retailer who unknowingly violates the law by selling the adulterated articles.

In this consideration of this question I believe it would be well to inquire whether or not it is advisable to require the manufacturers, importers, and jobbers who sell such commodities to merchants in Pennsylvania to have resident agents upon whom legal service could be made, enabling the authorities to hold them responsible instead of the innocent retailers.

I also suggest the advisability of making all pure food legislation conform as nearly as possible to the Federal Laws upon the same subject.

This entire matter, however, is referred to the Legislature for further investigation when any question touching pure food laws is being considered.

It is the duty of the State, when a depositor puts a dollar into a depository chartered under its laws, to exert all its influence and attention to protect that dollar. I therefore recommend a thorough examination of the Banking Laws of the Commonwealth with the view of framing a new Act which will more fully protect and safeguard the deposits of our people.

Such Act should provide that officers and directors in financial institutions shall be held legally responsible for any of their acts in violation of law, and should fix more definitely the responsibility of all persons connected with the management of such institutions, so that the people shall have the very best protection that the law can afford..

I most urgently recommend that such Act be framed to make compulsory the systematic examination, at frequent intervals, of all financial institutions chartered under the laws of Pennsylvania. If in the deliberations of the Legislature it shall appear that there is not at present a sufficient number of Examiners to attend to this duty, the want should be promptly supplied and authority given to appoint as many additional Examiners as may be found necessary to properly perform this work.

The comparatively small additional expense attendant upon an increase in the number of Examiners may be met by an addition to the amount of the payments now required from these corporations for the expenses of such examinations. Any increase in the general burden of taxation will thus be entirely avoided.

The investigation recommended may lead to an entire reorganization of the Banking Department. It should be carried on with judgment and discretion, and with the view of avoiding unnecessary alarm to financial institutions or unnecessary interference with them in the proper conduct of their business.

The duty of carefully investigating the conditions of Trust companies, chartered under the laws of this State, is a very exacting one; for not only is it necessary to ascertain whether their capital is intact, whether their loans are safe and whether the collateral securities held to protect them are of sound value, but an examination should also be made into the condition of their thousands of trusts and of the other business which they are authorized under the law to transact.

The best laws, if not properly enforced, will not correct any evils that may exist; and therefore, as Chief Executive of the State, I will do everything within my power to maintain the Banking Department at as high a standard of efficiency as possible, so that it may prove beneficial to the people whose interests it is our first duty to safeguard, and so that the business of financial institutions may not be unnecessarily harrassed, annoyed, or unfairly interfered with.

I recommend the necessity of passing an adequate civil service reform law, applying to the offices of the Commonwealth and to the offices of cities of the second and third classes and of the larger counties.

Previously to the dedication of the new State Capitol and during the progress of a heated political contest, charges of corruption and dishonesty were made in connection with the erection and furnishing of the Capitol Building. The people properly became thoroughly aroused upon this question; and while the charges were a surprise to me and I knew nothing whatever about the matter, still I felt that if there was any doubt as to whether or not fraud had been committed, it would only be settled by a prompt, energetic, and exhaustive investigation of all matters pertaining to the erection and furnishing of the Capitol.

I now most earnestly recommend that the entire matter be investigated, and that a Joint Special Committee of the Senate and House be appointed, with the fullest powers possible to subpoena witnesses and send for books and papers, for the purpose of making a thorough examination of the entire subject.

If investigation develops that there has been fraud committed or that the State has been wronged by any collusion, then every effort should be made to have the guilty parties indicted and punished. If it should develop that the suspected persons or any others have over-charged the State in the furnishing of supplies or materials, that payments for work have been duplicated, or that the State has been charged with and has paid for work not done, civil suits should also be commenced and the defendants compelled to make restitution.

No honest man has anything to fear from a thorough and search-

ing investigation of the entire matter; and there is no obligation upon any official or upon any citizen of the State to protect or shield any man who may be found to be dishonest. The people will not be, and should not be expected to be, satisfied with anything but a most rigid investigation. If there has been any fraud committed, surely there is no man who will not agree with me that those who participated in or profited by such fraud should not only be met with prompt punishment but should also be compelled to make restitution.

As the Governor of the State I will render to the Committee all assistance in my power to make the investigation an absolute thorough one. And in this connection I request that an appropriation be made and authority be given me to appoint special counsel and auditors, acting under the authority of the Attorney-General and representing the State, to appear before the Committee and assist in the investigation.

It has been stated that authority was given, in connection with the furnishing of the Capitol, for bills to be paid out of any unexpended balance in the State Treasury. If this be true, it is a most dangerous and unwise method of appropriating public money. No expenditure should ever be made except after an itemized appropriation, based upon the estimated cost of the undertaking and naming items specifically, and under a law prohibiting any expenditure in excess of the amount stated. Any other course is in opposition to correct business principles, and contrary to that safe economic policy that should govern all expenditures of the people's money.

I will conduct my administration in a fair, business-like manner, for the welfare of the entire State; and to this end I will ever be ready to counsel and encourage all legislation looking to the progress of Pennsylvania. As necessity may arise, it shall be my pleasure to communicate with you by special message upon any important subject affecting the advancement and prosperity of our beloved State. For that reason I refrain at this time from making a longer address. It is by our actions that we are to be judged; it is by what we accomplish in the matter of betterment for the State and our people that we are to be weighed in the balance.

It only remains for me to say that Pennsylvania has gradually but steadily gone forward. Prosperity is abroad throughout the entire State; all our manufacturing and industrial establishments are running upon full time; and all persons desiring employment are able to get it. We should do all within our power to see that this prosperity is continued, and should say to those who come from abroad to make their homes with us, "We have room for you, and if you will accept and take upon yourselves the responsibility of American citizenship, you are welcome to our State, and we shall be

glad to have you with us." Our people are law-abiding; and if men from abroad come here in quest of liberty, they must be willing to accept that liberty which is regulated by law. The hand of every American citizen, whether he be such by birth or by adoption, should be raised against any man or class of men attempting to teach any other doctrine. No man or aggregation of men should be allowed to defy the law, and none are so poor or humble as not to be entitled to its protection.



